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584 [582] the clan relation, etc; for no stripling may seriously contemplate matrimony until he has entered manhood (apparently corresponding with the warrior class), nor can he mate in his own totem, though all other clans of the tribe are apparently open to him; while the maiden must have passed (apparently by a considerable time) her puberty feast. In any event, too, the proposal is formally conveyed by the elderwoman of the suitor's family to the maiden's clanmother, when it is duly pondered, first by this dame and her daughter matrons; and later (if the proposal is entertained) it is deliberated and discussed at length by the matrons of the two clans involved, who commonly hold repeated councils for the purpose. At an undetermined stage and to an undetermined degree the maiden herself is consulted; certainly she holds the power of veto, ostensible if not actual. Pending the deliberations the maiden receives special consideration and enjoys various dignities; if circumstances favor, her kinswomen erect a jacal for her; and even if circumstances are adverse, she is outfitted with a pelican robe of six or eight pelts and other matronly requisites. When all parties concerned are eventually satisfied a probationary marriage is arranged, and the groom leaves his clan and attaches himself to that of the bride. 585 Two essential conditions—one of material character and the other moral—are involved in this probationary union; in the first place, the groom must become the provider for, and the protector of, the entire family of the bride, including the dependent children and such cripples and invalids as may be tolerated by the tribe—i. e., he must display and exercise skill in turtle-fishing, strength in the chase, subtlety in warfare, and all other physical qualities of competent manhood. This relation, with the attendant obligations, holds for a year, i. e., a round of the seasons. During the same period the groom shares the jacal and sleeping robe provided for the prospective matron by her kinswomen, not as privileged spouse, but merely as a protecting companion; and throughout this probationary term he is compelled to maintain continence—i. e., he must display the most indubitable proofs of moral force. During this period the always dignified position occupied by the daughter of the family culminates; she is the observed of all observers, the subject of gossip among matrons and warriors alike, the recipient of frequent tokens from designing sisters with an eye to shares of her spouse's spoils, and the receiver of material supplies measuring the competence of the would-be husband; through his energy she is enabled to dispense largess with lavish hand, and thus to dignify her clan and honor her spouse in the most effective way known to primitive life; and at the same time she enjoys the immeasurable moral stimulus of realizing that she is the arbiter of the fate of a man who becomes warrior or outcast at her bidding, and through him of the future of two clans—i. e., she is raised to a responsibility in both personal and tribal affairs which, albeit temporary, is hardly lower than that of the warrior-chief. In tribal theory the moral test measures

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the character of the man; in very fact, it at the same time both measures and makes the character of the woman. Among other privileges bestowed on the bride during the probationary period are those of receiving the most intimate attentions from the clanfellows of the groom; and these are noteworthy as suggestions of a vestigial polyandry or adelphogamy. At the close of the year the probation ends in a feast provided by the probationer, who thereupon enters the bride's jacal as a perpetual guest of unlimited personal privileges (subject to tribal custom); while the bride passes from a half-wanton heyday into the duller routine of matronly existence.

These details were elicited at Costa Rica in 1894 through methodical inquiries made in connection with the linguistic collection. This collection was made with the cooperation of Señor Alvemar-Leon as Spanish-English interpreter, together with Mashém and (commonly) the clanmother known as Juana María. Usually quite a group of Seri matrons with two or three warriors were gathered about, and to these Mashém frequently appealed for advice and verification, while they constantly expressed approval or disapproval of questions and replies, as gathered through Mashém's words and mien, in such manner as to afford a fair index of their habitual thought—e. g., when the Seri vernacular for "twins" was obtained and the inquiry was extended (by normal association of ideas) to the term for "triplets", Mashém collapsed into moody silence while the rest of the group decamped incontinently with horror-stricken countenances—thereby suggesting cautious subsequent inquiry, and the discovery that triplets are deemed evil monsters and their production a capital crime. It was in one of the earlier conferences that the first intimations concerning the unusual marital customs were incidentally brought out; the Caucasian interpreter and bystanders were diverted by the naive reference to the moral test, but their expressions were hastily checked lest the native informants might be startled and rendered secretive; then, during two later conferences, when Mashém and several matrons were freely participating in the proceedings, the line of inquiry was so turned as to touch on various aspects of the marriage custom and bring out all essential features; so that much confidence is reposed in the accuracy of the details.[1] The confidence in the verity of the customs was such as not to be impaired seriously by the fact that no records of coincident moral tests were known in the voluminous literature of marriage and its concomitants; nor was it shaken by the still weightier fact that none of the experienced ethnologists to whom inquiries were addressed during ensuing months were acquainted with parallel customs—indeed the only shadow of corroboration thus obtained came in the form of references to the widespread requirement of continence in war and ceremonies.

[1] It may be observed that Kolonia, when visited in January, 1895, failed to corroborate the descriptions of Mashém and the matrons, but his failure occasioned little surprise for the reason that he had not lived with his tribe since early boyhood, and is equally unacquainted with ceremonies alive concerning the myths, ceremonies, and even the taboos of the tribe.

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time they agree, she shall go along with him as betrothed, but he is not to have any knowledge of her till the utmost payment is discharged; all which is punctually observed. Thus they lie together under one covering for several months, and the woman remains the same as she was when she first came to him.[1]

This record also is peculiarly pertinent, partly in that it practically corroborates the Seri testimony, but chiefly in that it indicates definite transition toward a higher culture-plane in which the primitive material test is at least partially replaced by a commutation in goods or their equivalents.

On reducing the marital customs of the Seri to conventional terms, the more prominent features are found to be (1) strict clan exogamy and (2) absolute tribal endogamy, together with (3) theoretical or constructive monogamy, coupled with (4) vague traces of polyandry, and (5) an apparently superficial polygyny, as well as (6) total absence of purchase or capture of either spouse.

On reviewing the customs in the light of their influence on the everyday life of the tribe, certain features stand out conspicuously: (1) Perhaps the most striking feature is the collective character of the function; for while the movement originates in personal inclination on the part of the suitor and is shaped by personal inclination on the part of the maiden, all manifestations of inclination are open and public (at least to the elders of the two clans involved), while the personal sentiments on both sides are completely subordinated to the public interests of clans and tribe as weighed and decided by the matronly lawgivers and adelphiarchal administratives. Thus neither man nor maid mates for themself, but both love and move in the tribal interests and along the lines laid down by the tribal leaders. (2) As a corollary or a complement (according to the viewpoint) to the collectivity of the mating, the next most striking feature is the formal or legal aspect of the union; for the entire affair, from inception to consummation, is rigorously regulated by precedents and usages handed down from an immemorial past. Thus the roots of young affection are not destroyed but rather cultivated, though the burgeoning vine and the outreaching tendrils are trained to a social structure shaped in ages gone and kept in the olden form by unbroken tradition. (3) A collateral feature of the customs is the necessary reaction of the requirements on individual character of both groom and bride; for the would-be warrior-spouse is compelled to display high qualities of physical and moral manhood on pain of ostracism and outlawry, so that his paramount ambition and affection are at once stimulated to the highest degree, while the maiden's pride of blood and possession and her sense of regnant responsibility are fostered to the utmost. The brief preliminary courtship and the long probationary mating mark an era of intensification in two lives at their most impressionable stage; and if there be

[1] The History of Carolina, etc., by John Lawson (1714), reprint of 1860, pp. 362-363. Attention was called to this passage by Mr James Mooney.

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584 ought in the simple yet puissant law of conjugal conation—that law
585 whose motive underlies the world's song and story and all the pulsing progress of mankind as the inspiration of most men's work and most women's hopes—the vital intensity of this era passes down the line of blood-descent to the betterment of later generations. (4) Another collateral feature is the necessary reaction on clan and tribe; for not only
[182] does the individual character-making raise the average physique and
[46] morale of the group, but the carefully studied restraint of excessive individuality serves to strengthen still further the tribal bonds and to lift still higher the racial bar against aliens. The blackest crime in the Seri calendar is the toleration of alien blood; and no more effective device could be found for keeping alive the race-sense on which this canon depends than that virtually sacramental surveillance of sexual intimacy which Seri usage requires.[1]

000 On scanning the conventional classifications of human marriage in the light of the Seri customs, it becomes clear that these customs define a plane not hitherto recognized observationally. For convenience, this plane and the mode of marriage defining it may, in special allusion to the correlative race-sense, be styled *ethnogamy;* and the more systematic characters of this mode and plane of marriage may be outlined briefly:

1. The most conspicuous character of ethnogamic union, as manifested in the type tribe, is its absolute confinement to the consanguineal group. The breach of this limitation is hardly conceivable in the minds of the group, since aliens are not classed as human, nor even dignified as animals of the kinds deified in their lowly faith, but contemned as unclean and loathsome monsters; yet the infraction has a sort of theoretical place at the head of their calendar as an utterly intolerable crime. In respect to this character, ethnogamy corresponds fairly with the endogamy of McLennan, Spencer, and others, i. e., with the tribal endogamy of Powell.

2. A hardly less conspicuous character of ethnogamic union is the formality, or legality, accompanying and reflecting the collective nature of the function. In this respect ethnogamy is the direct antithesis of that hypothetical promiscuity postulated by Morgan and adopted by Spencer, Lubbock, Tylor, and others; and the customs of the type tribe go farther, perhaps, than any other example in verifying the alternative

[1] The remarkable race-sense of the tribe, with the conjugal conation in which it seems to rest, are discussed *ante*, pp. 149-160. There is nothing to indicate, and much to contradict, that the Seri are consciously engaged in stirpiculture; yet their social and tribal devices would seem to be no less effective in developing race-actions, with its concomitants, than were those of prehistoric men in developing the physical attributes of animal associates, such as the wool-bearing of the sheep, the egg-laying of the fowl, and the milk-giving of the cow; or the still more striking mental attributes, such as the servility of the horse, the fidelity of the dog, and the domesticity of the cat. All these attributes are artificial, though not consciously so to their producers, hardly even to modern users; they are by products of long continued breeding and exercise, commonly directed toward collateral ends (as when the horse was bred for speed, the dog for hunting, and the fowl and cat for beauty); and, similarly, the Seri race-sense would seem to be largely a by-product of faith-shaped customs designed primarily to propitiate or invoke supernal potencies—yet the collateral effect is not diminished because overlooked in the primary motive.

773 Before this it was day all the time, but then it became night and coyote only laughs at night. The black strings still hang about badger's neck."

It is strange to find, too, that a flood legend is traditional among the Seris. Chico said: "In the times of the ancients a great flood came, the ocean rose up and all the country of the Seris was under water except the top of Cerro Alto. There a few Seris gathered and were saved. Everyone else was drowned. To this day the top of Cerro Alto is covered with brush which the flood did not submerge. All Seri children are taught this flood tradition, and they must learn it by heart so as to teach their children and their grandchildren."

764 The death of a tribesman gives no cause for ceremony among the Seris, although the [765] nearest relatives may customarily wail, sometimes for months, morning and evening. The disposal of the bodies of the dead, is, however, of considerable interest. A hole about [412] three feet deep is dug by means of large clam shells and a cave is excavated for the head such that the earth will not touch it. The deceased Indian is wrapped in his own blanket and laid in the grave with the head to the East, face up. The body is covered and the grave is partly filled with earth, then covered with a layer of the spiniest of chollas and thorny brush, further filled, leveled and covered with another layer of chollas to discourage the coyotes from digging up the body. When the Seris are on the move, how- [766] ever, and grave-digging is too great a task, a body may simply be lifted high to the fork of a giant cactus and left there.

583 Marriage among the Seris is not so much
585 a ceremony as it is the completion of a bargain. Under ordinary circumstances, when a man buys a woman he strikes a bargain with the bride's parents and makes a down payment. Only after completion of the bargain does the woman go to live with the man, but even then payments do not cease but continue intermittently through life. Chico Romero, although "married" for fifteen years, gave his wife's father some paint that he had received in payment for guiding and
425 packing. It is also considered natural to
858 buy and sell children. One Seri, Santo

[p. 266 (B)]
[text continues on p. 267 (B)]

535 semi-darkness.
123 Soon two little boys joined the dance, stepping up and down in the sand. Lighted only by the flickering flames of the driftwood fires on the shores of this mysterious and dreaded isle, the soft murmur of the sea as a refrain to the wild chanting, the weird circling of glittering eyes, and wild dark faces, presented a scene of uncanny and savage fascination witnessed by white men probably for the first time.

[539] After each stanza there was a short rest. The singing was similar to most other tribal chanting.

532 Bob made the remark that the girl was old enough to be broken in
836 by the old Chief. I said, "How?"
622

He said, when a girl thirteen or fourteen has her menses, the
533 Chief takes her and goes through the family act. This is called
[929] 'breaking her in'. She is then eligible for marriage. A young man desiring marriage has to purchase the girl by giving the father a boat or rifle, both being necessary to the Seri's existence and pro-
535 tection. At the wedding they have sort of a fiesta and much mescal is drunk, which properly solemnizes a wedding.

944 When a girl has a baby it usually comes very naturally and easily,
846 but I remember one girl's first baby was three days in coming, and she suffered a great deal. This was on a subsequent trip. She was staying with many of her people on the mainland and someone asked them if they didn't want a doctor or other help. They said: No, they had one. It was a Medicine Man who chanted over the girl and dug hollows in the sand to fit her heels into. He said that the legs had to be kept apart. This was all he did. But ordinarily there is no trouble, and if a baby is born at noon the mother is up and doing, and cooks supper
[543] for her lord and master. The men treat their wives with kindness and each shares with the other any delicacy.

462 In Seriland domestic duties are reversed from the usual Indian
[383] methods. The men get the water and the women get the wood. This con-
[482] sists mostly of driftwood gathered along the shore, and it is a picturesque sight to see a string of women and girls bringing in loads of wood in baskets on their heads at sunset.

622 There are no plural marriages, but sometimes when a Chief is old,
515 or rather when his wife is old and can have no more babies, he can take a younger woman as his wife. The present Chief is getting old now, almost too old to break in the girls, so they may get a younger man. This might be called the perquisites of office. He takes the cream.

932 They hunt lice in the head and eat them. This is said to increase
825 the amorous desires. The penis of the male turtle is cut out and dried. This is pounded and pulverized and placed in the food of the women. This is said to create a desire for a man and the family act.